

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
ALBANY DIVISION**

MATHIS KEARSE WRIGHT JR.,	:	
	:	
Plaintiff,	:	
	:	
v.	:	CASE NO.: 1:14-cv-42 (WLS)
	:	
SUMTER COUNTY BOARD OF	:	
ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION,	:	
	:	
Defendant.	:	
_____	:	

ORDER

The Parties in the above-captioned case appeared on Friday, March 14, 2014, on Plaintiff *pro se* Mathis Kears Wright Jr.'s Motion for a Preliminary Injunction. In his motion, Wright seeks to enjoin the March 18 and May 20, 2014 elections for the Sumter County Board of Education, on the ground that a redistricting and other allegedly discriminatory practices violated § 2 of the Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1973. During the hearing, the Court denied Wright's preliminary injunction as to the March 18 election. This Order memorializes that ruling.

Wright primarily claims that the redistricting of the Sumter County Board of Education from a nine-member board to a seven-member board (five districts, with two at-large seats) dilutes the black vote by "packing" black voters into two districts. Wright therefore requests that the Court require Sumter County to retain its current nine districts. Even though the March 18 election concerns those nine districts, Wright also seeks to enjoin that election because an employer allegedly prevented one of the incumbent black boardmembers, Carolyn Whitehead, from qualifying for office without permission.

The Court raised questions during the hearing about whether Wright had standing to assert such a claim on Whitehead's behalf. Based on these questions, Wright

withdrew his request for a preliminary injunction as to the March 18 election. He did not present evidence on that claim. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Court denied the preliminary injunction as to the March 18 election because Wright had failed to carry his burden of showing a substantial likelihood of success on the merits and because of the imminence of the election, for which campaigning and early voting had already begun.

Therefore, for the reasons stated at the hearing, and for reasons to be stated in the Court's Order on the May 20 election to follow, Wright's motion for a preliminary injunction as to the March 18 election is **DENIED**.

SO ORDERED, 17th day of March, 2014.

/s/ W. Louis Sands
W. LOUIS SANDS, JUDGE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT